14. DIALOG File

DIALOG FILE: USER MESSAGES

Introduction

The VA FileMan DIALOG file is used to store dialog that would normally appear on a screen during interaction with a user. This dialog may include error messages, user help, and other types of prompts. FileMan distributes a set of entries in the DIALOG file.

The VA FileMan calls, BLD^DIALOG or $$EZBLD^DIALOG, are used to move text from the DIALOG file into arrays. The text can then be displayed using the display mode of choice.

Developers may add entries to the DIALOG file. Entries such as error messages, help messages and other general prompts can be placed in the file. The DIALOG file should not be used for storing alternate synonyms either for data or for fields in the data dictionary such as field labels or descriptions.

Note: If you wish to add entries to the DIALOG file, you must apply to the DataBase Administrator for a numberspace.

Advantages of the DIALOG file for user interaction are:

- User interaction can be easily separated from the other program functionality, a necessary step in creating alternate interfaces to roll-and-scroll, such as GUI.
- Text stored in the DIALOG File can be re-used.
- Package error lists can be identified and listed by error number in documentation.
- Text can be returned in multiple languages without changes to developers' code. (See "Internationalization" section of the "DIALOG File" chapter in this manual.

Use of the DIALOG File

VA FileMan controls and distributes entries in the DIALOG file in the number range 0 through 10000. These entries should not be edited by other package developers, with the exception of adding foreign language equivalents for text (see the "Internationalization and the Dialog File" section of the "DIALOG File" chapter in this manual for details). Some of the FileMan error messages are available for retrieval by other package developers, using the FileMan program calls. These messages are listed in the "Error Codes" appendix in this manual. Entries within